

**Michigan Network Libraries
Standards Revision January 2006
For Subregional Libraries**

A. Liaison. Subregional Libraries shall provide their regional library and NLS with statistics, evaluations, reports and plans for the coming year as required. They shall keep their regional library informed of activities, concerns and problems that arise. They shall maintain regular communication with other network libraries.

Essential Standards

1. Maintain current and accurate statistical records: to document use, services, and acquisitions; to meet the requirements of the administering agency, the funding agency, and LC/NLS; and to generate information for planning purposes. (ALA 10.1)
2. Send subregional librarian or designee to regularly scheduled meetings of network libraries and other ad hoc committee meetings, programs or workshops as appropriate.

Enhanced Standards

1. Develop and regularly review a comprehensive long-range plan designed to develop, implement, maintain and improve services and programs and to make optimum use of resources. (ALA 8.1) (ALA 8.2)
2. Send subregional librarian or appropriate staff to yearly regional or national conferences of the NLS network. (ALA 11.14)
3. Prepare an annual narrative and statistical report and make it available in appropriate and accessible formats to the administering agency, the funding agency, patrons, LC/NLS, and other interested parties. (ALA 10.2)
4. Participate in professional associations as appropriate. (ALA 4.6)

B. Staff. The subregional library shall provide sufficient staff to direct and run the service. This staff should possess strong communication skills, be able to work effectively with people who have disabilities, possess skills in community awareness and have

related work or volunteer experience with the population served. See Appendix for job descriptions that meet applicable FTEs.

Essential Standards

1. Operate under a written affirmative action plan making every effort to advertise to, solicit applications from, and employ qualified persons with disabilities. (ALA 11.1) (ALA 11.2)
2. Maintain a commitment to cultural diversity. (ALA 11.3)
3. Prepare an organizational chart describing clear lines of authority. (ALA 11.4)
4. Develop and maintain a position description for each title or each category of position for paid and volunteer positions. Provide an annual work plan and evaluation for paid staff. (ALA 11.5)
5. Review and determine staffing patterns and requirements at a minimum of every 5 years. (ALA 11.6)
6. The person designated as the subregional librarian will act as the administrative head, possess a master's degree in library science from an ALA accredited program and shall be on the same administrative level as comparable unit heads within the administering agency. (ALA 11.7) Only that portion of administration directly attributed to the subregional library will count toward the required FTE for subregional librarian.
7. Staff performing reader advisory shall possess a bachelor's degree. (ALA 11.8)
8. Plan and conduct formal orientation programs for employees that include information about blindness and disabling conditions as well as on the structure and philosophy of service. (ALA 11.9)
9. Send the subregional librarian and appropriate staff members who have completed at least 6 months on the job to the NLS orientation program. (ALA 11.10)
10. Encourage and support relevant continuing education activities for staff at all levels of the organization including participation in professional organizations and site visits/exchanges to other libraries as appropriate and meetings of the computer system user group. (ALA 11.12)

11. Ensure that appropriate staff members participate in meetings of patron organizations, and network conferences. (ALA 11.13) (ALA 11.14)
12. Meet ALA Guidelines for levels of staffing when averaging FTEs over the three most recent years.

Enhanced Standards

1. Offer tuition reimbursement to staff members who are working toward a graduate degree in library science, or a bachelor degree if qualifying as Reader Advisor.
2. Develop additional related skills among staff through hiring practices or continuing education. Such skills include but are not limited to fluency in another language, Braille transcription, and strong skills in various adaptive technologies.
3. Exceed ALA Guidelines for levels of staffing by at least 1 full time equivalency.

C. Registration/Updating Borrower Files. Subregional libraries shall register new borrowers and inform their regional library of address changes, magazine requests, cancellations, transfers and other relevant information. (ALA 1.1)

Essential Standards

1. Initiate service for new borrowers within 5 business days. (ALA 1.1b,c)
2. Contact each new borrower within 2 weeks after receipt of application either by telephone or in person.
3. Maintain and update borrower files; forward requests for magazines, address changes and other relevant information to the regional library. (ALA 1.1a)
4. Maintain Comprehensive Mailing List System (CMLS) records and verify transaction reports at NLS website on a weekly basis.
5. Transfer borrowers from geographic service area to other network libraries as appropriate.

6. Ensure the confidentiality of patron records following the guidelines presented in the ALA policy on confidentiality on patron records. (ALA 1.1e)

Enhanced Standards

1. Contact new borrowers by telephone 3 to 6 months after service begins to discuss service options and answer questions. A letter should be sent if unable to contact new borrower by telephone.

D. Circulation. Subregional libraries shall provide mail and walk-in recorded book service to registered borrowers in their specified geographic area. They shall provide borrowers with recorded books from personal request lists, assist borrowers in book selections, and make library selections as necessary.

Essential Standards

1. Offer circulation options to patrons such as “turn around”, “on-demand”, or a specified time/quantity schedule. (ALA 1.5c)
2. Offer request and reserve options. (ALA 1.5c)
3. Offer “turn around” time for circulating books of no more than three days if this service option is selected.
4. Respond to requests for immediately needed items within two working days if books are available.
5. Process patron requests through interlibrary loan via the Internet when the local collection cannot meet the need. (ALA 1.18) Staff workstations should include Internet access to facilitate this process.
6. Establish loan periods for library materials. (ALA 1.4)
7. Levy no fines on overdue, damaged or lost materials in the national collection. (ALA 1.4a)

Enhanced Standards

1. Offer a “turn around” time for circulating books within one working day if this is the service option selected.

2. Keep a master copy of popular recorded titles and duplicate in sufficient quantity to meet borrower needs.

E. Machine Lending. Subregional libraries shall fulfill the terms of the NLS Sublending Agency Service Agreement (Appendix I).

Essential Standards

1. Assign and issue available equipment in accordance with the NLS Sublending Agency Service Agreement and the Machine Lending Agency Manual. (ALA 1.2)
2. Advise regional library of machine transactions.
3. Have a staff member coordinate equipment repair and routine maintenance.
4. Provide digital playback equipment and accessories as they are developed and made available using an equitable distribution policy. (ALA 1.2c)

Enhanced Standards

1. Have a staff member knowledgeable and experienced in equipment repair who is able to repair equipment and who trains and coordinates staff or volunteers who repair equipment.

F. Facilities. Subregional libraries shall have sufficient space for effective working conditions and shelving of collections. Subregional libraries shall provide hours of service that meet patrons' needs. (ALA 1.5b)

Essential Standards

1. Provide sufficient space for efficient shelving of recorded book collections, i.e. enough space to shelve a two year recorded book collection as defined in standard G.1 plus expansion room for one additional year of recorded books for a total of three years of collections.

2. Provide sufficient workspace for staff to effectively charge and discharge materials and maintain borrower records.
3. Offer borrower access for a minimum of thirty-five hours per week, fifty-two weeks per year, exceptions approved by the Regional Library on an annual basis.
4. Offer borrowers a barrier free service point. (ALA 1.5)
5. Internet access must be available at appropriate staff workstations.

Enhanced Standards

1. Offer borrowers physically accessible stacks.
2. Provide sufficient space for effective working conditions for staff and a reception and reading/working area for borrowers. Table 2 of the ALA Revised Standards of Service for the Library of Congress Network of Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, 1995 (Guidelines p. 28-30) can be used to assist in determining space and usage requirements.

G. Collections and Reference Services. Subregional libraries shall maintain a collection of materials and provide reference services suitable for use by the blind and physically handicapped community. The content of the collection shall reflect the needs of the subregional's users. Staff shall keep the collection current.

Essential Standards

1. In each format circulated from your subregional library maintain at least one copy of each English language title distributed by NLS in the last 24 months. (ALA 2.4b)
2. Maintain information about national, state, and local organizations and programs concerned with services to eligible users and refer individuals as appropriate. (ALA 2.7)
3. Identify appropriate materials, equipment and services in local public libraries and encourage borrowers to use this information to supplement services from network libraries. (ALA 1.11 b,c)
4. Evaluate the collection annually and weed titles using the NLS XESS procedure. (ALA 2.6)

5. Open containers and inspect recorded materials, rewinding as necessary. Ensure the collection is maintained in good repair by cleaning, repairing or replacing containers and recorded materials as appropriate. (ALA 1.9a)

Enhanced Standards

1. Maintain an expanded NLS collection that meets the needs of local borrowers.
2. Maintain or have access to reference collections on disabilities and serve as an access point for information about agencies and services. (ALA 1.14) (ALA 1.11)
3. Provide or have access to a circulating collection in other media and make it available to borrowers in the subregional library's geographic service area.
4. Maintain a demonstration and/or circulating collection of adaptive devices.
5. Establish and monitor deposit collections and demonstration collections to extend services. (ALA 1.17) (ALA 6.5)

H. Public Relations. Subregional libraries shall publicize their collections and services to encourage use by as many eligible individuals as possible. (ALA 3.1)

Essential Standards

1. Participate in statewide marketing activities.
2. Distribute and display NLS, regional library and subregional library brochures, newsletter and other public education materials to local public libraries and other appropriate agencies or organizations. (ALA 3.1)
3. Collaborate with public libraries and other libraries, schools, veterans' organizations, senior organizations and other agencies as appropriate to promote network services. (ALA 3.1a)
4. Establish interactive communication with public libraries in the subregional library's geographic service area. This communication will serve two purposes: 1) to inform public libraries about subregional library service and activities; and 2)

to inform subregional library of public library services and activities that may be of interest to subregional library borrowers. (ALA 4.5)

Enhanced Standards

1. Develop and implement a formal marketing plan for the geographic area served.
2. Establish ongoing communication with local agencies or organizations serving the Blind and physically handicapped, to reach potential patrons and to establish partnerships. (ALA 3.1a)
3. Promote the service of the subregional library via the library's website.
4. Collaborate with public libraries, schools, and other agencies to promote literacy services for young (pre-reading) children. (ALA 1.16)
5. Develop and implement awareness programs and materials for students in library science, education, early childhood education, social services, and similar college and university programs as appropriate in your service area. (ALA 3.1b)

I. Borrower Contact. Subregional libraries shall promote independent access and maintain regular contact with all borrowers in the geographic area served. (ALA 1.7)

Essential Standards

1. Attempt to contact all borrowers who have been inactive for 12 months to determine whether they wish to cancel.
2. Provide free telephone access to borrowers during hours the subregional is open and message recording capability during hours the library is closed. (ALA 1.8a)
3. Provide access to patrons via walk-in, e-mail, Fax, and web based technologies. (ALA 1.8 b,c,d)
4. Produce and distribute a subregional library newsletter in hard copy and electronic formats on at least quarterly.
5. Respond to patron contact and requests in a timely manner. (ALA 1.10) (ALA 1.8)

6. Develop and implement methods for evaluating patron satisfaction at least every three years. Sample telephone survey, eg. (ALA 8.3)

Enhanced Standards

1. Survey all borrowers every 2 years to evaluate consumer satisfaction and to acquire information on appropriate matters. (ALA 8.3)
2. Develop programs for borrowers, based on needs and interests as defined by borrowers. Examples are consumer involvement committees, summer reading clubs, book discussion groups, vendor fairs, and programs on adaptive technology. (ALA 1.15)
3. Produce and distribute newsletter in Braille and/or recorded formats.
4. Maintain a website that is accessible and provides links to consumer groups and other library service agencies. (ALA 1.13)

J. Volunteers. Subregionals should use volunteers as appropriate.

Essential Standards

1. Train and use volunteers as appropriate. (ALA 5.1. 5.2, 5.3)
2. Have written job descriptions for volunteers.
3. Publicly recognize the services of volunteers on an annual basis. (ALA 5.7)

Enhanced Standards

1. Use volunteers to support activities, which supplement the basic program of service.
2. Review and evaluate utilization of volunteers in the subregional library.

Appendix

ALA Guidelines for Subregional Library FTEs

- 1 Professional Librarian for each 2,500 patrons
- 1 Reader Advisor for each 1,500 patrons
- 1 Other Professional/Paraprofessional for each 3,000 patrons
- 1 Technical/Support staff for each 1,000 patrons

Direct Service Duties that qualify for FTE tally

- Reader advisory
- Circulation activities
- Machine inventory and repair
- Stack management
- Public speaking engagements
- Related meeting attendance
- Catalog and Inventory of materials
- Overdue retrieval
- Patron record maintenance
- Reports to NLS, the Regional Library, and LM

Overhead FTEs that do not qualify:

- Parent organization services that are provided agency wide such as printing, technical support for standard computer operations, building maintenance, human resources, and business management do not qualify in the FTE count.

Guidelines for Determining Minimum Space Requirements

Reception

- 200 sq. ft. continuously staffed and properly furnished

Reading Room

- 400 sq. ft. located near reception area
- Stocked with catalogs, brochures, books and magazines on cassette and in Braille
- Includes tables with cassette machines equipped with earphones for private listening
- Low-vision aids
- Aid for users with physical disabilities

Work Area for staff and volunteers

- 150-175 sq. ft. for desks, user files and records, automated equipment, and passageways

Offices

- 125 sq. ft. per person
- Private offices for at least the head and assistant head

Recording, tape duplicating and storage

- 600 sq. ft. includes space for recording booth, duplicating units, and shelving for master tapes and blank tapes

Shipping and Receiving

- 1,500 sq. ft.
- Includes a loading dock accessible to the postal truck

Equipment and Supply Storage

- 800 sq. ft. for storage of catalogs, brochures, and a 3 month supply of machines

Conference Room

- 500 sq. ft. should be available

Staff Lounge

- 300 sq. ft. should be available

Book Stacks

- Square footage required must be estimated after calculating linear feet of shelving
- Shelving needed for Braille is 3 linear ft. per 12 volumes
- Shelving needed for cassettes in single row is 3 linear ft. per 24 containers

